

Make Eating Fun

Mealtimes Mean More Than Feeding Your Kids.

Making eating fun will help your kids develop a healthy relationship with food. How they see you relate to food and how you feed them send clear messages on how eating can be fun. Kids will learn from you!

Make the family meal a family activity!

- **Let your kids help make the family meal.**

Kids learn best by doing, not watching, and often are more willing to eat foods they helped prepare. Even young kids can lend a hand by setting the table, spreading butter or jam, or tearing lettuce for a salad.

- **Pretend your kitchen is a restaurant.**

Have your kids select and make the "Specials of the Day," as well as set and "bus" the table.

Make mealtime a happy time!

- **Happy talk makes for a "Happy Meal."**

As you pass the pasta and pour the milk, you also can pass along stories about your day or funny stories about dinnertime when you were a kid. Encourage your family to join in. Avoid distracting noises such as TV or loud music.

- **Try new foods with your kids.**

Remind them that sometimes they have to try a food more than once to see if they like it. Ask other parents, friends, or neighbors for recipes — and any stories that may go with them. Discuss the foods being served.

Enjoy your food!

- **Kids enjoy making decisions.**

Let your kids choose what and how much to eat of what you're serving.

- **Eat food with obvious enjoyment!**

Let your kids see you enjoy eating. Go ahead and talk about how much you like a particular food. Ask your family how they like their food.

- **Food is not a pacifier.**

Many people turn to food to solve a kid's problem. Try talking to your kids, rather than first comforting them with cookies or candy.



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Food is Fun!









1. Make five food group kabobs: Cut up bite-sized foods from each food group. For example, apple slices, tomato wedges, bread, cheese cubes, and a slice of cooked turkey.
2. Make cookie cutter pancakes: Prepare and cook your favorite pancakes. Cut pancakes into different shapes by using your favorite cookie cutter.
3. Use the "I Tried It" Chart below to record new fruits and veggies you've tasted.
4. Plant fruit or vegetable seeds in a plastic container or cup, add water, and place in a sunny window.
5. Make a card for a friend or parent with pictures of his/her favorite foods glued to it.

"I Tried It" Chart 1-2-3-4 ... I think I'll have one more!

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

* Tip to adults: If you would like to focus on another food group, you can use the same chart!

Figure out the mystery foods! Then in the space provided, write which food group each is from.

	+		=	_____	=	_____
				Food		Food Group
	+		=	_____	=	_____
				Food		Food Group
	+		=	_____	=	_____
				Food		Food Group

The "Eat for Health" Campaign was developed by the Missouri Nutrition Network, a nonprofit, collaborative effort of public and private organizations throughout the state. Partial funding for this project comes from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Answers: 1.) Pancake; grain group 2.) poultry; meat group 3.) pineapple; fruit group